

## **Treasure Island – 28 January 2017 performance**

I have attended many of the Rotherfield pantomimes over the years – all are good fun but obviously some are better than others. Treasure Island is among one of the really memorable ones! It started as it meant to go on – colourful and at a great pace.

The Spirits of the Sea –played by Heather Campbell and Gussie Morley – set the scene and then knitted the scenes together beautifully. Long John Silver (Larry Robinson) was suitably frightening as he stomped around on his one good leg (great costume work there!) but yet had some fun scenes with the learner pirates (how do such little people manage such gruff piratey voices!!!). The Blackbeard team of pirates added colour with their swashbuckling songs – and acted their socks off even when just swabbing decks or hauling up the mainsails (or whatever it is that pirates do).

The dashing Jim Hawkins (Jess Lunn) was a hero with a heart of gold! I particularly loved the tongue twister moment with Rosie Bloom (James Gallifant) and Potty Patsy (Beth Campbell) which Jim zipped through leaving poor Rosie spluttering and in knots! Rosie (and her vast behind) was on top form – aided by several exits into the audience to pinch wine from chief heckler Barry Shyvers. It could not have been scripted better!

There were some brilliant characters on stage – Blind-Ali (Holly-May Penny) and Sea-Snake Sally (Kate Rignall) were a hilarious comedy duo on their own – someone give them a slot in the next panto!!! Captain Mullet (Ellie Welch) added some powerful vocals (that girl can sing), Billy Barnacle (Dan Shaw) showed how to die in good Pantomime fashion – several times! Zara Turner as Penny made a fitting love interest for Jim Hawkins (some wonderful costumes here again). Her father the nice but dim Squire (ably played by Simon Virgo) made a less fitting match after finally giving in to the energetic love overtures of the buxom Rosie! As the pantomime progressed, we still had some memorable characters to meet – high stepping, sniffy Barmy Ben (Sammy Dawkins) was hilarious – I wanted to rush on stage and give him some cheese. My favourite of the night? A squawky colourful parrot (Ethan Buss) – complete with life size cage!

You cannot review a pantomime without mentioning the music, costumes and props – all adding to the overall success of the evening. Mark Tasker – you are a genius! Who else could create a palm tree you can climb and a cannon that can be so dramatically fired into the audience - with a bang that was a real fitting end to a brilliant show!

Adam Hardy (director), you should be suitably proud. Well done everyone!!

**Jan Duchesne**